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## THE LAST TWENTY YEARS.

If there ever was any decided disposition in the more exalted classes of society to disregard the lowly, or if any such sinful contempt was ever really manifested, it must be allowed to have given place, in our own time, to a very different feeling. For some years past, the more fortunate and better educated classes have shown so eager and restless a desire to promote the physical and moral improvement of the operative orders, and have devised and set in motion so many different means for accomplishing those ends, that we should suppose the operative orders must feel themselves as much bewildered, if not alarmed, as obliged, or at the least must occasionally smile at the contending claims of so many worthy gentlemen for the honour of doing them good. "Let us get up mechanics' institutions," cries one; "room for reading-rooms," cries another; "come to our temperance meetings," exclaims a third; "go to church," is the expedient suggested by a grave voice in the corner; while a fifth enthusiast recommends a national system of education. Verily, a contest of porters for the honour and pleasure of carrying one's baggage, or a war of advertisements relating to cheap teas and coffees, is but a type of the competition which is now kept up for the attention of the working classes to various schemes for their advantage.

It is scarcely twenty years since these exertions in behalf of the lowly were commenced. Previously to that era, persons of all ranks were contented with the machinery which existed for the cultivation of the national mind. The inadequacy of this machinery in its various departments was never thought of. To be born to a life of ignorance seemed neither a hardship to the individual so circumstanced, nor a danger to the rest. Science, literature, education, and every other means by which the minds of men can be softened and improved, were, such as they then were, devoted to the exclusive benefit of the upper and middle classes, while many of the latter, and the whole mass of the operative orders, were thought to be skilled enough if they only could execute their humble professional duties. It is curious to trace the different system of things which has come into existence since that time.

Only eighteen years ago, the number of children attending school in England was little above six hundred thousand. With the exception of the recent partial adoption of the plans of Dr Bell and Mr Lancaster, the mode of teaching was the same imperfect system which had been employed unchallenged since the days of the Henries. In 1833, the number attending school was thirteen hundred thousand, or more than double; being an advance from one-fifteenth to one-ninth of the population. Within the same time, about three hundred infant schools have arisen—a class of seminaries more than any other calculated to improve the humbler orders of the community. During the same period, changes beyond all calculation, and all for the better—to the worse was impossible—had taken place in the modes of instruction, the character of the school-books, and the abilities of the teachers.

The improvement which has taken place in the literary means of mental cultivation, has not been less remarkable. During the last ten years of the eighteenth century, the annual number of new publications was, at an average, 372. During the first twenty-seven years of the present century, the average number was 588. In 1833, 1180 new works saw the light, altogether over and above periodical publications, of which the monthly alone amounted to 236. To satisfy any one that an advance has taken place in quality as well

as quantity, all that is necessary is to glance over the lists of publications given at the ends of the periodical works of twenty years since. What reminiscences are thus awakened of wretched imitations of the *Ratcliffe romances* and *Charlotte Smith novels*! "The Unknown, or the Northern Gallery"—"The Man of Sorrow, by Alfred Allendale"—"Artless Tales"—"The Red Tyger, or Truth-will out"—are a few of the names which strike us under the head "Novels and Romances," in a volume of the *Edinburgh Review* for 1808; and every body above thirty years of age must have a perfect notion of what the names import. To compare the very worst of the fashionable novels of our own day with these works, would be to compare the Regent's Park to Green Arbour Court. In that large department of literature termed *Miscellaneous*, the degree of talent, common sense, and virtuous purpose now at work, exceeds what formerly was applied to it in a similar proportion. The information and moral improvement of society could scarcely be detected as objects contemplated by the miscellaneous writers of the last age. A display of third-rate abilities—at the most a wish to give amusement, not always in consistency with the decencies of private life—seemed the presiding aims; and even where information was the sole end either professed or attained, the work was often wretchedly done. Then was also the age of yellow wove quartos and octavos, with streamlets of type running through meadows of margin. Books were dear by fashion. A bookseller would have then been ashamed to publish any thing of which a single copy was to cost only a trifle. For a poem of no great length, he would charge from one to two guineas. A collection of old state papers would be published at eight guineas. The life of a deceased statesman in six volumes, cost £15, 15s. Even old books, which appeared in new editions, bore prices now calculated to strike us with wonder. There was an edition of *Walpole's* little romance of the *Castle of Otranto* at five-and-twenty shillings, and one of *Blair's Grave* at two guineas and a half. Books were accordingly the luxury of the rich. If a man in moderate circumstances wished to read, he had to haunt book-stalls and auctions, where odd volumes of the *Spectator*, and dark-complexioned lives of *Oliver Cromwell*, and an inexplicable but very abundant old book called the *Turkish Spy*, contended for his love—or he might purchase cheap editions of certain pious treatises, such as *Drelineourt on Death*. But for classical works in the belles lettres, there was no alternative from the eye-destroying prints of *Messrs Suttaby and Walker* [a great boon, nevertheless, to the humbler reading world]; while, for books in history and science, the only resource was to take up with certain ingenious compilations, called the *Tablet of Memory* and the *Young Man's Best Companion*. A choice of books was not then to be thought of. At an auction, one purchased any thing that was cheap, simply trusting that the money would not be altogether thrown away. At a book-stall, one book was held to be quite as good, and as suitable to your necessities, as another. We remember, in our own green days of literary appetite, inquiring at one of those marts of learning for a cheap copy of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*: the venerable dealer confessed he had none, "but here," said he, "is a nice *Life of Bonaparte*;" evidently assuming, that the biography would be a sufficient substitute for the fiction. How changed is all this now! Within only the half of twenty years, we have seen the rise of a class of original works, expressly adapted by their literary character, as well as price, for the order of persons who were formerly so destitute. In volumes at four, five, or at the utmost six shillings, the middle

and working classes can now obtain excellent historical and scientific treatises, and also the works of many of the greatest masters in the belles lettres which Britain has ever produced. Within a still less space of time, we have seen the rise of an order of weekly periodical works, still more exactly fitted in every respect for the information and refinement of those classes. Of these, the total number of copies circulated is beyond our reckoning; but of five, which have attained the largest share of notice, the aggregate circulation is believed, upon good grounds, to be two hundred and ninety thousand. Each of these sheets, be it remarked, is, in extent of literary matter, a small volume. Each may be fairly presumed to have at an average six readers. Thus, if we suppose, that, in addition to the above number, sixty thousand of less notable, but equally moral and instructive sheets, are sold, we have above two millions of literary sermons administered to the people weekly, and chiefly to the classes most in need of such instruction. In itself, this may be said nearly to duplicate the literary machinery previously existing in the United Kingdom—and all, let us remember, is the creation of the last four years.

Twenty years ago there were no mechanics' institutions. There is now hardly any town of note which has not established one. Of the total number we are ignorant; nor are we aware that any calculation of the total number of members has ever been made. We have been informed, however, that, in the winter of 1835-6, no fewer than thirteen hundred of the working classes attended scientific lectures in the city of Glasgow. If the number in other large clusters of population be in proportion, the aggregate must be immense. We may here mention an improvement upon mechanics' institutions, as we cannot scruple to call it, which has recently been exemplified in Glasgow. At the commencement of the winter of 1834-5, the workmen at the Caledonian Pottery, about three hundred in number, associated themselves for educational and moral purposes, under the patronage and management of the masters. It became a condition of employment in that large work, that threepence weekly should be stopped from wages, for the support of this educational and moral scheme. A library was established, which, in November 1835, consisted of four hundred volumes; it was connected with a reading-room, which at the same time was regularly supplied with one London and five Glasgow newspapers, besides several of the magazines and minor periodicals. On Monday evenings, the reading-room is devoted to a musical entertainment, in which the workmen are themselves the performers. A day-school receives the children, and during five evenings of the week there is schooling for all, of whatever age, who choose to apply. On three evenings of the week, there are lectures from two young men of scientific ability, upon "mental and natural philosophy, history, geography, astronomy, chemistry, and physiology," for which, however, a ticket, price seven shillings and sixpence, is necessary. Finally, there is a chapel, also supported by the fund, and which is said to be attended by a larger proportion of the people than any district place of worship whatever. Such are the benefits which may now be secured weekly by a working man for the sum which, twenty years ago, was required for a glass of debasing liquor, the enjoyment of which, even granting it to be an enjoyment, was only momentary. He might, indeed, have then, as well as now, spent the sum to better purpose; but the better purposes were then fewer, and less tempting. The alehouse never had an efficient rivalry till now.

In the Potters' Institution, which, we are glad to learn, has already been imitated in other large works,

the most agreeable feature is the attention paid to mental science and to moral superintendence. The views of those who originated mechanics' institutions were too limited: they thought the natural sciences all-sufficient. Ignorant of human nature, they expected the cultivation of the knowing faculties to regenerate the whole character. This error is now in the course of being detected; and the Caledonian Pottery will have the honour of being ranked among the first to give a practical exemplification of what was really wanted. Another and most praiseworthy effort to the same purpose has been made in Edinburgh during the winter of 1835-6. A body of tradesmen, under the name of the Society for the Diffusion of Moral and Economical Knowledge, commenced, in November 1835, a double course of lectures to the working classes, which were delivered in a large dissenters' meeting-house, and during the whole winter attracted audiences considerably exceeding a thousand. The most remarkable external feature in the proceedings of the society was a resolution to charge, for the admission of each person to each lecture, the sum of one penny; thus making the cost of attendance not only as moderate, but as easily paid, as possible. The courses consisted of one weekly lecture each. One course related to the physiology of the human body; the other and more important involved a complete system of moral philosophy. In the latter case, the lecturer was Mr James Simpson, author of an excellent work on Education, which has been frequently quoted in this sheet, and one of the most purely benevolent and disinterested of all who at present exert themselves for the good of the people. The subject, it may be supposed, was not the most likely to attract partially educated minds. It was not, however, a formal and abstruse view of mental phenomena, which Mr Simpson presented to his hearers. His chief object was to show the relation between the mind in all its faculties, or, if the reader please, manifestations, and the circumstances in which man is placed; inculcating the supremacy of the moral sentiments. By extempore speaking, a happy manner of address, and much ingenious and amusing illustration, he contrived to do what we venture to say few other men could have done—he sustained the attention of above a thousand artisans, for a whole winter, to a science which has almost become proverbial for its tedious abstractions. Nor, if their continued attendance had not been a sufficient proof of the value they put upon what they heard, was another testimony wanting; for at the close of the course they spontaneously associated for the purchase of a silver medal, which they presented to Mr Simpson, with an inscription commemorating the sense they entertained of the benefits which they had derived from the course, and of the disinterested kindness of the lecturer,—a similar testimonial being presented at the same time to the gentleman who had addressed them upon the subject of physiology.\* Such a transaction has a value to the public as well as to the individuals ostensibly concerned; it shows that the people at large are themselves beginning to be interested in the cause of education—the only point necessary to make education a subject of national concern and state patronage, as it ought to be.

The other existing additions to the means of moral and intellectual improvement which were in force twenty years ago, are too multifarious to be enumerated. The whole certainly form something creditable to the nation, and are in the way of greatly accelerating our social progress. There are still, however, a few serious defects in the machinery of popular instruction. With regard to common schooling for the young, there is wanting one great central establishment for the exemplification of a right system of education, from which the same right system might be propagated into provincial establishments, these last to be the permanent schools for instruction in the art of teaching and the theory of education. We say one central establishment in the first place, because by no other means can uniformity in one right system be obtained. For infant and juvenile education there is also wanting a means of imposing local assessments, so that education, up to a certain point, should be attainable by all without direct payment; an innovation somewhat startling, but unavoidable if we wish, as a matter of police or of humanity, that all should be educated. With respect to the existing literary means of social improvement, nothing, we suppose, is to be desired, but that private enterprise may continue to be rewarded, according to its deserts, by public favour. But when we turn to the lecturers, there is evidently something still to be done. In order that a sufficient number of these public servants should be brought into the field, and that their qualifications should be tested by persons better qualified to judge than the ignorant who are to be their employers, it is highly desirable that there should be some central board, under the sanction of the state. A few gentlemen in the Scottish capital have lately, under the title of the Society for Aiding in the Diffusion of Science, offered themselves in all

modesty as a medium through which provincial communities in Scotland may correspond with those anxious to assume the office of lecturers; but we suspect that an authoritative sanction of some kind will be necessary for the success of their object.

And now for 1856!

#### THE CURATE OF LANGBOURN, A STORY.

THE rays of the autumn sun fell cheerfully on the fields around Langbourn, as the curate of the village, Mr Benson, set out on the path leading from his humble dwelling. For some time he walked onwards with downcast eyes, and from the expression of his pale and thoughtful countenance, it was evident that a tinge of melancholy pervaded his meditations. The road to the mansion of his rector, whither he was now proceeding, was a bye-path, intersecting rich and well-cultivated fields, in which the reapers were prosecuting joyously the labours of the harvest. Their clear ringing voices, and noisy peals of laughter, aroused the curate from his abstraction, and he felt as if the light-hearted sounds chid him for the pensive character of his own thoughts. "The Almighty," said he, "has sent a good and plentiful season, that his creatures, the high and the low alike, may have wherewithal to eat; and even the red-breast that chirps across my path shall have his portion. Want has hitherto been mercifully withheld from crossing my threshold, and poverty has been too long an inmate of the dwelling to make its continuance a thing to be dreaded. Alas! how unwilling is my tongue to utter, or my heart to admit, that there is a deeper cause for the heaviness that oppresses me! Mary, my beloved child, it is thy fading cheek and drooping spirits that my soul would fain exclude the knowledge of from itself, for the temporal comforts and means that might revive thee are not in my power!" Uttering a pious wish for the object of his anxiety, and beseeching resignation to his own mind, the curate walked onwards to the abode of his superior.

Before relating the purpose and tenor of the interview between the rector and the curate, we may describe briefly to the reader these personages themselves. The rector was a man of a portly presence, haughty and grave, even to sternness, in his address. His origin was humble, for he was the son of a poor tradesman, and the presentation to the livings he now enjoyed had been the result of a long service as tutor in a family of rank. Though thus meanly descended, the rector was a proud man; and his first object on acquiring the rectory had been to unite himself with a well-connected lady, who, though considerably beyond her prime, formed a bond between her husband and the families of rank in the neighbourhood. Still the churchman did not fully attain his object, for, though elevated in station in his own eyes, and even in those of his inferiors, by the marriage, those with whom he was most anxious to mingle were not conciliated, by his personal merits, to overlook the humility of his native rank. This was unfortunate for him in more than one respect; those with whom he might have formerly associated he now considered himself elevated above; and not being admitted freely to the higher class of society, he stood in some measure in a lonely and even solitary position. His lady was not of an age to enliven his home with children, and by degrees the temper of the rector, which was naturally social, became haughty and soured. He was by no means uncharitable, but his charities were sadly affected by prejudices; and he had imbibed, during his intercourse with the higher classes, the doctrine that poverty is indispensable, and indeed a blessing, to the lower orders of society, in every well-regulated state. Mr Benson, the curate, was in many respects a contrast to his rector. He was modest, amiable, and intelligent, and was beloved and esteemed by the inhabitants of Langbourn. He was the immediate descendant of a family that had been of considerable importance in the neighbourhood; and this circumstance, together with his general character, made him respected even in quarters which his superior could not propitiate. An early love-marriage had prevented his struggling, like his fellows, for advancement in the church, and had made him glad to take refuge from want in a curacy of thirty-five pounds a-year. His wife died without leaving any family, and the curate took into his home a widowed sister and her only child, to whom he was deeply attached. His niece, Mary Warner, was now about the age of eighteen, a slender and elegantly formed young woman, with one of the sweetest and most expressive of countenances, the index to her amiable mind. She had lately been residing for some time with an aunt at a considerable distance, and, since her return home, had, to the great distress of her fond uncle and parent, drooped both in health and spirits. Never had the curate felt the narrowness of his income so severely, as when it limited his means of procuring necessary comforts for his beloved niece. Mr Benson was on his way to the rectory to receive his half-yearly pittance, and it grieved him to think

how small a balance would be left of it after the payment of the debts already incurred.

On reaching the rector's goodly though old-fashioned mansion, buried in venerable woods, which the rector had for centuries held as their peculiar domain, the curate was shown by one of the servants into an ante-chamber, with the promise that his reverence should be informed of the visitor's presence. Some minutes elapsed before the servant re-appeared, in which time Mr Benson, on looking around him, could not help contrasting the duties of the rector with his own, and the difference in the reward. The thought, however, was rebuked as quickly as it arose, and he uttered a prayer that his reward might be, not temporal, but spiritual and eternal. He was at length ushered into the presence of his superior. "Sit down, sit down, Mr Benson," said the rector; "I hope your family are well. Pray, excuse me for keeping you waiting; my wife's cousin, Sir John Outlands, had called, and we were engaged in sipping a glass of port. Here, Peter, bring a glass of wine for Mr Benson." The rector had acquired a taste for good wine during his tutorship, and was really a critical judge of its merits. The poor curate sighed almost audibly as he raised the glass placed before him to his lips, and thought of the dear one whose declining health such a cordial might revive, while to him it was useless, as it was undesired. The rector continued to descant on the subject of his visitor and relation Sir John, and the qualities of the wine, to all which the curate listened patiently. At last, on mention being made of the business for which Mr Benson came, his reverence said, "Thirty-five pounds is a large sum, air; and, with the other perquisites, constitutes, altogether, I have no doubt, a handsome enough living. Indeed, Mr Benson, I have just had an offer from a young man, a very valuable person, to perform the duty for thirty pounds." The curate was too much struck with this announcement to make any reply. The thought had sometimes occurred to him, that, could he overcome his pride so far as to inform the rector how much need there was of an augmentation of salary, it was possible that it might be granted by that gentleman, as the duties of the curacy were more extensive than usual. This hope had taken a deeper hold of his mind than he himself was sensible of, till it was thus overthrown, and the prospect of losing his present pittance, small as it was, presented in its stead. The rector probably saw the depression his words had caused, and he proceeded to say, "This must be thought of, Mr Benson; in the meantime, you of course will go on with your duties; we may speak of the reduction at some future time." The servant had been called into the room previous to this last speech, and his master directed him to pay the salary to Mr Benson. He then left the room, imagining, no doubt, that he had acted charitably in not pressing an immediate reduction; a view of the subject certainly not coincided in by the other party concerned.

The rector derived his information regarding the affairs of the parish, both clerical and laical, chiefly from the lips of inferior functionaries, to whose purposes and projects Mr Benson's integrity had often proved a barrier. The perquisites attached to the curacy were insignificant, and the rector had been maliciously misinformed on the subject. As the curate pursued his walk homewards, in deeper depression than before, he thought with regret of having permitted this impression to remain on the mind of his superior, and resolved to explain it away, if possible, at an early opportunity, either personally or in writing. His mind then reverted to his sister and niece, and he reached his home with a load on his spirits which he in vain endeavoured to dispel.

The curate's dwelling was a low whitewashed cottage, consisting internally of two small rooms, with sleeping apartments attached to them. In the parlour, at the moment of Mr Benson's return, sat Mary and her mother, engaged in some feminine occupation. The cloud on her uncle's brow was soon observed by the niece, and she sat down by him, anxiously inquiring at the same time if he were well. The curate parted the locks from her fair and high forehead, and kissed her affectionately before he answered her question. "Were you well, dearest, little care would affect me; but as long as your cheek is pale and thin, Mary, so long must I be ill at ease. You take no adequate support, and seem, indeed, in the condition which the poets describe as characteristic of true love unrewarded." He spoke this in a playful tone of reproach, without observing the effects of his language. Mary blushed and became pale alternately; and an accurate observer might have believed that the analogy pointed out, unsuspectingly, by the curate, was not far from the truth. This might have even occurred to himself, unsuspecting as he was, had not an interruption occurred from the delivery of a letter by a boy at the cottage door. The curate read it attentively, and simply saying that he was under the necessity of going to the village, rose and left the house.

The letter which the curate received ran as follows:—"To the curate of Langbourn—Sir, I take the freedom of addressing you, for a reason that can only be explained on a personal interview, which I beg of you most earnestly to grant me as early as your convenience will permit.—A stranger." The messenger brought it from the village inn, and there an answer was expected by the writer. It can scarcely be said that the circumstance excited much curiosity in the mind of Mr Benson, though the handwriting was

\* During the same winter, another body of the working classes in Edinburgh were favoured with a series of lectures on political economy, which were delivered to them by a well-qualified lecturer—Dr Thomas Murray—and were attended by about three hundred persons.



that of an educated person, and such was not the common way in which ordinary tales of distress came to the benevolent curate's ear. His mind, however, was fully preoccupied with the disheartening prospects held out in the interview with the rector. Before proceeding to the inn, he resolved to pay a visit to the tradesmen who supplied his family with necessities, and discharge their several accounts. As he reached, with this intent, the door of the village butcher, he heard his own name mentioned within, and, not desirous of hearing either evil or good of himself, stepped into the house at once. The party conversing with the butcher was the rector's servant, who, after hastily saluting the curate, left the place. The master of the shop was a man of very middling character, and no favourite of Mr Benson's; a circumstance the former knew well enough, but which the absence of any rivals in his trade entitled him, in his own opinion, to disregard. After the account was settled, the curate was about to take his leave, when his attention was arrested by some words muttered indistinctly, and with some degree of embarrassment, by the butcher, regarding future payments. On being asked, the man, recovering his usual unblushing confidence, repeated what he had said; and the curate found, to his dismay, that the babbling servant of the rector had overheard the conversation at the rectory respecting the reduction of salary, the repetition of which to the butcher had produced an unwillingness to give the usual credit. "God pity and help my poor sister, and Mary, if others should act with me like this man!" thought Mr Benson to himself, as he left the shop in silence.

None of the other tradesmen to whom the curate gave the sums they were entitled to, repeated the conduct or sentiments of the butcher; but the anxious fears of the clergyman suggested that this forbearance might be owing to their ignorance of the same circumstances. After the last account was discharged, the curate found himself with little of his salary remaining, and with melancholy prospects of the future. In this state he still remembered that his services were required, and, uttering a hope internally, that the distress—for distress he was prepared to find—might not be pecuniary, he entered the little inn of Langbourn. The boy who had been the bearer of the letter appeared to be in waiting for him, and conducted him upstairs, where, opening the door of a small apartment, he merely uttered the words "the curate, sir," to a person within, and then retired. The stranger was seated at a table, from which he immediately rose. He was a young man, apparently not above two or three-and-twenty, with a tall and handsome person, and a countenance strikingly open and beautiful. The blush with which he met his visitor, heightened the ingenuousness of his look, and his manner had an air of breeding and refinement, which appeared in despite of the faded dress which he wore. "I have to apologise, sir," said he to the curate, "for the great liberty I have taken, though it will appear greater when I state to you its object." Respectfully handing a chair to Mr Benson, and begging him to seat himself, the stranger continued. "I am at present, sir, in a situation which makes me blush for the imprudence that has placed me in it, and made such an explanation as this necessary. It is requisite that you should know all the circumstances which led to this unfortunate situation. My father was a general officer in the army, who fell in battle when I was a child, and was followed to the grave soon after by my mother. My father's elder and only brother, who possessed the family estate, was the guardian to whom the dying lips of my mother consigned me, and never was charge so affectionately executed. My uncle was unmarried, and, having some family pride in his disposition, brought me up as he thought the heir of his estates, and the supporter of the name, ought to be. He was but too kind to me, and since my boyhood has striven to gratify my wishes in every respect. This generated in me habits of paying too much deference to my own will and too little to that of others, and rational lookers-on would have called me, I am afraid, a spoilt child. After returning from the university, I took up my residence for some time in the country, with my uncle, intending speedily to set out upon my travels. Here occurred the circumstances which were the origin of my first disputes with my kind uncle, and which have caused me to be here, but which still, in some respects, I never can regret. Near my uncle's residence is a small village, which in my rides and walks around the neighbourhood I had frequent occasion to pass through. I met there, while calling accidentally at the house of a friend, a young lady, whose beauty struck me indescribably at the first view. I will not endeavour to paint to you the charms of mind and disposition which I found her, on further knowledge, to possess; suffice it to say, that the impression made by them is not, and never can be, erased from my heart. I often visited the family in which she resided, and indulged for some time in a species of dream, from which I was rudely awakened by my uncle's discovery of the object of my visits to the village. He commanded me to give up an attachment which was so derogatory to the dignity of the family. The irritated state of my uncle's feelings constrained me to put some guard upon my own. I withdrew from his presence in silence, but it was only to seek that presence where alone I felt happiness. You will pardon me these expressions, sir, for I am still a lover. I could not conceal from the object of my affection what had occurred, and the tear which dimmed her lovely eyes, grieved, at the same time

that it charmed me. This was the first time that my heart was satisfied that my passion was returned; and though the proof was given at the very moment that she was exhorting me to forget her for ever, it gave me consolation even then. She bade me farewell, and I have never again seen her. Her residence in the village was, I should have informed you, merely temporary; and when I returned on the following day to her relation's house, I found that she had taken her departure, and had besides directed her friends, as her peace of mind was valued, not to acquaint me with her home, which, during the brief enthrancement of our love, I had not been informed of, though I knew the position in life of her friends to be respectable. I returned to my uncle's house in despair, and angry words passed between my kind relation and myself. In short, sir, instead of remaining to attempt to pacify and reconcile my uncle to what I felt to be necessary to my happiness, I was imprudent enough to leave his house with the determination not to return to it. I wandered about the country for some time, hoping always that a chance meeting might occur with her I loved; but this romantic idea never was gratified. The money I had taken with me being expended, and pride and other causes still making the idea of returning home odious to me, I was forced, for mere subsistence, to join myself a few days ago to a band of strolling players. We arrived at this inn last night, and this morning I found that my companions had disappeared early, leaving the burden of their night's expenses upon myself. But I also found in this paper," lifting it from the table, "what grieved me much more. Here is an advertisement, informing me of my uncle's illness, and entreating my return, at the same time declaring that all my wishes shall be gratified." The curate had listened with much interest to the stranger's story, and took the newspaper handed to him. After reading the advertisement, he said, "I hope, sir, you have no other intention but to return as soon as possible to your family." "Most assuredly I shall," said the stranger; "the cause which detains me for a moment from the road thither is the necessity of paying the sum required by the people of the house. If you do me this favour, sir, you will make me ever grateful for permitting me to go where my presence will bring comfort." The curate rose without reply, and, motioning the stranger to keep his seat, left the room. On his return, Mr Benson mentioned to the young man that the necessary sum was paid, and, with the freedom of a clergyman and a senior, gave him some paternal and kindly admonition; at the same time pointing out the extreme impropriety of conduct of which he had been guilty, and the misery that almost invariably follows the course of life into which he had recklessly plunged. He whom he addressed, like the repentant prodigal, was deeply affected, even to tears, by the friendliness of the tone and counsel, and said, when the curate ceased, "I shall neither forget your counsel, sir, nor the obligation you have conferred on a stranger, one indeed who does not know the name of his benefactor. I as yet know you, and have heard of you, by no other name than that of the curate. My own name is Norton, Charles Norton, with the bearer of which I hope you will yet be further acquainted." The curate gave his name in return, and requested Mr Norton, before leaving the village, to visit his residence, advising him at the same time to defer his departure till next morning, as the day was far advanced. After a promise to this effect, the curate and Mr Norton parted.

The rector, and every thing connected with his own circumstances, were for a while obliterated from Mr Benson's mind by the interest excited by the young stranger's story; and such is the pleasing effect that a benevolent action, however trifling in itself, leaves on the mind of the doer, that the depression of his spirits did not return in the same degree of severity. On entering his home, he was affectionately reproached for neglecting his usual meal, but warded off the censure, by stating, after satisfying his hunger, that he had a tale to tell for their gratification. Even Mary's languor was dissipated for the time by the tidings; but when the curate commenced the narration, the attention of the young lady soon changed to strong emotion. "Out of delicacy," said Mr Benson, when he came to the stranger's falling in love, "I did not inquire the name of the lady, nor did he mention it, but his own name is Charles Norton." Mary uttered not a word, but in a fainting condition let her head fall upon the shoulder of her mother. "I see it all," exclaimed the curate, as the idea flashed across his mind, which may already have been in our reader's; "it is our own Mary of whom I have been speaking!" Resting her head upon her mother's bosom, she confessed, at their anxious entreaties, that she was the unfortunate object of Charles Norton's love, and that she had concealed the circumstances from them, to spare their feelings, and hoping that time would remove the impression left upon her mind. Her uncle and mother were filled with anxiety for her, and prevailed upon her to go to rest immediately, which she only consented to, on hearing the issue of the story from the curate.

The curate deliberated long and earnestly with his sister that night, whether it would be proper to admit Norton's visit in the morning, after what had come to their knowledge. The result was, that a letter was dispatched to him at an early hour, stating plainly what Mr Benson had learnt since their interview, and declining a visit at that moment, on account of the

possible danger from an agitating meeting to Mary, who had not been informed that he was still in the village. The note was written in friendly but decided language, and a brief and hurried reply was returned by Charles Norton, expressing deep anxiety for Mary's health, and at the same time hoping, that, though it might be improper to receive him at present, he might be permitted, at no distant date, to see one so dear to him, and whom he had so long desired to see in vain.

Nothing was heard by the curate's family of him on whom the happiness of its most beloved member depended, till a few weeks after the circumstances we have related, when a letter, with a black seal, arrived for Mr Benson. It was from Charles Norton, and contained an account of his uncle's death, which the writer stated to have been occasioned, according to the opinion of the attending surgeons, by confirmed dropsy of many years' standing. This had relieved the writer's mind, he said, of a great load. "As soon as circumstances will permit," continued the letter, "I shall visit Langbourn, when I hope to be allowed to visit my dear Mary, and offer her myself, and all I have in the world." Need we add, that Mary's cheek soon recovered its bloom, and that a few months afterwards she became the wife of the object of her early and only affection. In the comforts, also, of a moderate living, to which he was presented by Mr Norton, and in the happiness of seeing the children of his beloved Mary spring up like olive plants around him, the curate of Langbourn forgot the unfriendly bearing of the rector, and his threatened reduction of salary.

#### SKETCHES OF THE GOLD COAST.

THE Gold Coast of Africa is a tract of country of considerable extent, running east and west along the northern shores of the Gulf of Guinea, and in the 5th degree of north latitude, or almost under the equinoctial line. At a point called Cape-Coast, an English settlement has existed for a considerable time, both as a commercial and military station. The furthance and the protection of our traffic in gold and ivory, and the suppression of the slave-trade, were the chief objects of our government in the formation of the colony. Much interesting information has been obtained from intelligent residents and visitors, regarding the character and manners of this and the adjoining negro countries. The late lamented traveller, Mr Bowdich, in particular, gave to the world, in his work on Ashantee, a great accession of knowledge respecting a quarter of Africa long haunted by Europeans only for the most abominable purposes. The consequences of the infamous traffic to which we allude, are but too visible in the descriptions given of the negro character as it appears in these regions; and it is both melancholy and humiliating to contrast the malignancy and ferociousness of the coast natives, with the comparative mildness of many internal tribes, removed from the intercourse of civilised men.

Some delightful tales, illustrative of the habits and character of the Gold Coast natives, have been lately published by Mrs Lee (formerly Mrs Bowdich), who accompanied her late husband in his visit to this quarter of the globe.\* To these stories she has added notes, which contain much valuable descriptive matter, such as would in ordinary circumstances form the materials of a book of travels. On a future occasion, we may present a specimen of the fictitious portion of the volume; but in the meantime, we propose only to make a few jottings from the notes:—

The natives of the Gold Coast are exceedingly attentive to their personal appearance, and, where they are possessed of the ability, spend what would even in Britain be thought considerable sums of money in decorating themselves. An Ashantee fop of the highest order rubs himself well with grease, and sallies forth on gala-days, besprinkled all over with gold dust, which glitters in the sun, and produces a most extraordinary effect. Both men and women cut or shave their hair into most fanciful patterns; and they will sit for hours under the razor, until their heads resemble a Turkey carpet dyed black. The males of all classes wear a bandage round their loins, under their clothes, and the richer classes always have it made of slips of silk. Their feet, arms, and other parts of their body, are adorned with gold, sometimes in shapeless lumps, as they are found in the gold pits. "The natives of the western coast always carry their gold fastened round their knees; and frequently, on loosening a strip of dirty rag from this part of their persons, several ounces of gold will roll out, either in dust, lumps, or ornaments. The people of Mandingoe, and the neighbourhood of the river Gambia, always bring it to market in the latter form, for they believe, that, if Englishmen could get possession of gold dust, they would sow it in the ground of their own country, and want no more from them. A great value is set on rock gold, by the inhabitants of those countries in which this metal is found only in the form of dust; and the great men will frequently, on state occasions, so load their wrists with these lumps, that they are obliged to support the limb on the head of a boy. The largest piece I ever saw, and which was very pure, weighed fourteen ounces." The natives of the whole of the western coasts work very beautifully with slender strips of coloured leather, prepared and dyed

\* Stories of Strange Lands, 1 vol. Moxon, London.

by themselves. Sheaths of daggers, sandals, quivers, cushions, &c. are thus ornamented with the most intricate patterns. The king of Ashantee, one of the most powerful negro monarchies in this part of Africa, lives in true barbaric grandeur, one of the emblems hung round his throne being a human skull. He is entitled by law to possess 3333 wives, a mystical number on which his own and the national welfare rests. At his death, his servants, above a hundred in number, are slaughtered on his tomb, that he may arrive in another world with a suite becoming his rank.

Thieving from white men is encouraged among the natives, and even taught by fathers to their children. One boy who had evinced good feeling to a considerable extent, was taken into the house. "I taught him his duties, nursed him when he was ill, and saved him repeatedly from the floggings with which his father threatened him; but he became so drunken and insolent, that although I detested the punishment, and had made a resolution that no one belonging to me should ever feel it, I was obliged to send him, and another boy whom he had corrupted, to the corporal, each to receive six lashes. A private message also sent to the corporal, the purport of which was, not to hit hard, created considerable amusement among my countrymen at my expense; but whether hard or soft, the chastisement availed nothing, for during the two first days of my seasoning fever, he stole property to the amount of twenty pounds, and had the hardihood to appear in my presence, decked with some of the spoils. I was then obliged to give him up, well convinced that ages must elapse ere the system so long pursued by Europeans with these poor creatures can cease to influence their actions." The acting of a negro is admirable, and no torture or bribe will tempt him to lay aside a deceit in which he is determined to persevere. He watches every turn in the countenance of the person whom he is interested in deceiving, accommodates himself to every expression, and will even change the nature of a sentence in the middle of it, guided solely by a careful watching of the eye of him to whom he is speaking.

The stigma of witchcraft is never obliterated in these countries, and the most cruel torments await the person so accused. One instance of this may be mentioned:—"A scarcity of provisions had for some time prevailed, for this often happens to a certain degree, owing to the indolence of the people, which wholly prevents them from taking any measures against the accidental destruction of their crops, an unusually dry season, &c. On consulting the priest as to what was to be done, the authorities of the town were directed to seek in the bush for the witch who had caused their troubles, under the form of a tall, thin, red-skinned woman, with a child at her back. There were many such to be seen; the victim was soon found, and brought into the town. I was alone in my house, with the exception of a black boy (for all the rest had gone to the fun, as they thought it), and, seeing the unfortunate creature dragged past my windows, and the barbarians tearing her hair from her head, heaping dirt on her, and she making no resistance, I asked him what they were going to do with her. He told me so confused a story, that I could not comprehend it; but the faint cries of the poor infant rang in my ears, and made me very uneasy. After vainly worrying myself for about a quarter of an hour, the mystery was explained: the dance and yell of the executioners, and the clashing of their knives, announced the return of the party, and they passed me with their clothes girt tightly round them, their pointed caps on their heads, and making the most frantic gestures: one of them bore the poor creature, bound hand and foot, and gagged, slung across his shoulder, like a sheep; and they proceeded to a hill close by, where the priests awaited them, to assist in the slaughter. The governor was again absent, for they would not have dared thus openly to carry on their purpose, had he been within reach, and I therefore sent a note to his secretary. In two minutes, almost all the officers, and many of the soldiers in the castle, rushed out, armed with the first weapon they could find, and proceeded to her rescue. They arrived just in time, and conveyed her within the walls of the fort, where, having secured her child, I saw them both lodged in comfort."

The religious ceremonies of the western coasts are confined to the adoration of the Fetish, a spiritual being, represented by uncouth images bearing a faint resemblance to the human figure. Offerings are presented on all occasions of solemnity to this idol, or, in other words, to the priests, who are an exceedingly numerous and influential body. From the power of imagination over the minds of the ignorant natives, severe penalties are in general the consequence of incurring the anger of the priesthood. "The transactions, mystery, and power of the Fetish, bear a strong analogy to the history of the Inquisition. At all hours, and in all places, the natives of Western Africa are subject to its visits and interference; vengeance is never laid aside, though it may sleep for years; the most inviolable secrecy is observed by all its members; and after intervals long enough to banish suspicion, the victims suddenly disappear. It were vain to ask what is become of them; all are afraid to own the truth, and a shrug of the shoulders, or shake of the head, invariably accompany the profession of ignorance. The priests know every thing, meddle in all affairs, share every piece of good fortune, rob their followers without scruple, and even prevent the extirpation of panthers, hyenas, &c. by making them sacred animals,

and demanding a fine from every one who takes a part in destroying them; and, by means of communications with the fetishes of other countries, extend their influence far beyond the calculation of ordinary mortals."

The funerals of distinguished persons are solemnised with great pomp and splendour, and are attended by immense crowds of people. The more stunning the noise and extravagant the behaviour, the greater is the honour done to the deceased. "At the funeral of a lady of rank, all yelled at the top of their voices, danced and fired in parties; all screamed to the sound of the most barbarous instruments, even the beating of flat sticks, rattles, and brass pans; and, by night, some were so tired, and others so intoxicated with the rum and fermented palm wine, which are plentifully distributed, that, unable to stand, they lay down, kicked, and roared. I used to dread giving permission to any of my servants to assist at these ceremonies, for they were generally unable to speak, or even move, for a week after one day's exercise of this kind. The victims, generally bulls or cows, decked with flowers and finery, accompanied by the priests, and the slaughterers with large knives, formed a part of the parade, and being killed in the evening, were then dealt out to the hungry mob. Where the English forts stood, these victims were confined to quadrupeds, with very few exceptions; but in the interior, hundreds of men and women are butchered on these occasions."

There generally prevails among Europeans, particularly among Britons, some difficulty in conceiving how it is possible to feel any degree of comfort in countries where hyenas howl about the doors at night, where crocodiles infest every creek, and ants, lizards, and snakes, swarm in and around the dwellings. "It is surprising to watch how rapidly familiarity diminishes all these antipathies. I never shall forget the cold chill which crept over me, on first seeing a huge lizard crawling on the wall of my bedroom; yet in time I not only was amused by the rapid movements of the large lizards, as they chased each other up and down the verandah where I sat, but even fed them daily. A snake close to me, I thought would be death; but at last I became so careless about them, that, although there was a nest of deadly snakes in a hole in the wall, which it was necessary to pass in going the shortest way to the kitchen, I used to watch for a minute or two, and then dart past, when they drew their heads in; a dangerous experiment, for they are very fierce when they have young ones. A battle between a snake and a rat was a curious sight, to which we were summoned by hearing, in the hall above the store-room, a hissing and squeaking for which we could not account. On opening the store-room to ascertain the cause, a snake was to be seen rearing its beautiful many-coloured neck and head, while a rat's black eyes were glistening with rage. They were in too great a fury to be disturbed by our approach, and flew at each other several times: at length the rat died in great agony, swelled up to a frightful size, and covered with foam; the snake was immediately destroyed by the servants. A panther, subsequently brought to England, was presented by the king of Ashantee to Mr Bowdich. He was remarkably large and beautiful of his kind, and the spots on his bright and glossy skin destroyed all the rules established by our naturalists to enable them to distinguish between the leopard and the panther. As he was very young, the efforts made to tame him were completely successful. Nothing alive was ever given to him to eat, and so well he was trained, that frequently on their march to the coast, when the natives would not contribute any provisions, he would catch a fowl, and lay it at the feet of Mr Hutchison, who always rewarded him with a select morsel. On arriving at Cape Coast, he was tied up for a few days with a slight cord, and after that remained at liberty, with a boy to watch that he did not annoy the officers of the castle. He especially attached himself to me and the governor, probably because we bestowed more caresses on him than any one else; we took care, however, to keep his claws well filed, that he might not get an unintentional scratch. He was as playful as a kitten, and a few days after his cord had been taken away, he took it into his head to bound round the whole fort; the boy ran after him, which he mistaking for fun, only increased his speed, and caused him to dash through all the narrow spaces. Most of the inhabitants were frightened out of their senses, and it was highly amusing to see the sudden disappearance of all living things, even to the sentinels. When tired, he quietly walked in at my door, and his pursuers found him lying on the ground beside me, composing himself to sleep, whence he was taken without the least resistance. His chief amusement was standing on his hind legs, resting his fore paws on the window-sill, and fixing his head between them, in this posture to contemplate all that was going on in the town below. The governor's children, however, often disputed this post with him, and dragged him down by the tail, which he bore with perfect good humour." He preserved his harmless character up to the period of his death, which happened at Exeter 'Change, where he was placed temporarily by his last possessor, her Royal Highness the Duchess of York.

Parrots and monkeys are abundant upon the western coasts, and the former are of the most amusing and valuable kind, with regard to their imitative powers of speech. "The black servant of my cousin, who was about sixteen years old, one day stole some tallow candles, by way of a feast. Being caught in the act of devouring them, some bustle ensued, and his little

master ran into the cabin informing us of the affair in very animated tones. Two hours after, when all was silent below, I heard one of the parrots pronounce the name of the delinquent softly, which was Hauboo; at last he added two or three more words, and by night, screeched out most distinctly, 'Hauboo's a teif, he eat de candles;' being the actual expression of the child." The monkeys possess all the usual qualities of their kind; but a very formidable species of the orang-outang tribe is said also to exist in the forests near these coasts. Its stature is described to be about four feet, and its breadth enormous; the stroke of its paw will kill a man instantly, and it has never been taken alive.

The barren unwooded character of some parts of Africa does not prevail here. The whole of the western coasts, particularly the shores of the Gulf of Guinea, are covered with thick forests, which reach nearly to the water's edge. The baobab tree covers an immense belt of land, extending from Senegal across the continent even as far as Abyssinia. This tree is supposed to attain to a greater age than any other of the vegetable kingdom, and grows to an enormous size, measuring sometimes seventy-six feet in circumference. The silk cotton, with its creeping arms, and an abundance of parasitical and climbing plants, mingle and vary the scene. "Sometimes the whole of an enormous trunk will be covered to a great height with the most brilliant convolvuli, which stealing unperceived through the branches, reach the summit, and again shooting forth their gay blossoms in the sun, seem to mock their less aspiring brethren. Scarlet, orange, and pink flowers, will cover the lower boughs, and hang in festoons from one tree to another. Often the climbers will become larger than the support to which they cling, and constantly form chains which look big enough to fetter the Atlantic. Then the runners, or slender fibres, dropping from the twigs, take root below, and, vegetating in their turns, form the whole of these mighty forests into a maze of network." The forests abound in wild pine-apples, of a red colour, and only fit for cooking; but the slightest cultivation, even watering, makes them of delicious flavour. Fine savannahs, watered by clear and fresh streams, are interspersed through the forest recesses, and contribute to render the appearance of nature in these regions most beautiful. Maize, rice, yams, water-melons, and tobacco, are the vegetables chiefly cultivated, though all heat-loving fruits may, of course, be grown to great perfection here. Botanists are in some doubt about the manner in which tobacco was introduced, as they declare it belongs exclusively to the New World. The probability is, that the early Portuguese traders brought it originally to these coasts.

"Many have been the efforts, and great the zeal, expended on these poor people, and yet Christianity has made little or no progress in the western part of Africa. Better success has attended the endeavours of Europeans behind the Cape of Good Hope, but there is little comparison to be made between the two countries. This is a subject which has always deeply interested me, and I cannot forbear to offer a few comments concerning it. We must first grant that the Gold-Coast nations have all been, more or less, corrupted by that abominable traffic which was so long a disgrace to civilisation. They have seen the worst of Europeans, and their natural proneness to imitation, added to the idea which has in all ages existed of the superiority of white men, has led them to adopt the manners of the slave-traders. It is a well-established fact, that one bad example will do far more harm than a good one will cause improvement; and, unfortunately, of these examples the very worst have been offered to the western negroes, I am sorry to say, even among those charged expressly with the task of enlightening them. I have heard them say, 'Parson tell us black man more wicked, he no lub one anoder, and den parson go home, beat his wife.' Added to this strongly operating cause, there is much mistaken zeal in the well disposed, which leads them to expect too much at once. It is a task of great difficulty even to teach a negro to read; he quickly copies every thing which requires manual dexterity, he rapidly seizes on the form of every thing he beholds, and sooner learns to write than to read; for the moment he meets with words of a metaphysical nature, he vainly tries to attach a meaning to them. Very excellent people have thought, when a negro, by dint of application, has been enabled to read the Gospel fluently, they have given him an infallible means of conversion; but when we consider that the whole of his previous life has been spent in the gratification of sensual feelings, can it be wondered at that the mind must be prepared before any real impression can be made upon it?" Young negroes of promise have been brought to Britain, and education bestowed on them as far as they were capable of receiving it. Great hopes were entertained of the influence of these, when conveyed back among their countrymen, but they proved far more inefficient than even white preachers. The same issue has attended many other attempts; and on contemplating these, the question naturally arises, whether it be yet the time for the civilisation of the negro. Certain it is, that the Moors are making rapid strides in overrunning the African continent, and, either from the religion of Mahomet being more congenial to the existing idolatry than Christianity, or from the better endurance of the climate by the Mahometan teachers, many more converts are made



to the Moorish than to the Christian doctrines. It might be added, that it will require a long course of patient culture of the faculties of this degraded race, before any good can be expected from the exertions made to Christianise them. And, alas, to enter on such a course would be next to useless, as long as the traffic in slaves is carried on, which it at this moment is to an extent hardly conceivable. It is estimated that during last year twenty thousand negro slaves were smuggled from the shores of Africa. Dismal will the reckoning be of those countries which continue to encourage this horrid trade.

#### THE SENTIMENTALIST ON AN OMNIBUS.

THERE is no one of the fine old-fashioned feelings which used, about a hundred years ago, to be considered as an ornament, that has suffered such a fall as that of sentimentalism. At the present day, if one dare to be sentimental, instantly the whole circle of his friends point at him the finger of derision, and he is voted a bore. Probably in so doing, the world may be correct; but that there is still some trace of sentiment, and that in quarters where it would be least expected, the following anecdote will show:—

As I placed myself the other day, in London, on the box-seat of one of the omnibusses that ply between "St John's Wood" and "the Elephant and Castle," I was much struck by the driver remarking, "We don't know, sir, as what we may all come to;" but supposed at first that it was the preface to some threadbare tale of woe, which he of the whip told to his passengers, for the purpose of getting a glass of gin, and therefore determined not to give it much attention. When I found myself rolling along the upper part of Regent Street, without the tale having advanced or receded, my curiosity was not a little excited, and I made up my mind to pay it attention, merely, as may be supposed, because I found that it was not to be so easily come at. Along Oxford Street and Regent Street the driver was busy "tooting" for passengers, and kept, as he depressed the thong of his whip and elevated the butt end, calling out ever and anon, "Going down, sir? Charing Cross—Elephant and Castle, sir." We stopped the usual minute at the corner of the Regent Circus, after which the guard bawled out, "All right, Sam," and we were again in motion.

The under part of Regent Street was much crowded with carriages, waggons, and other vehicles, and it required great skill to thread our machine amidst the countless mass passing and repassing. At the corner of the Quadrant, Sam drew a deep sigh, and, casting a most woebegone look at me, says again, "We don't know, sir, as I was saying, as what we may all come to." "No," I replied, "that is very true; but unless you look after your whip-hand, we'll very soon come down into that empty waggon." "That a'n't what I means, sir; I says we don't know as to what we may all come to. [Going down, sir?]" "Well, then, what do you mean? I suppose that you intend we should very soon come to Charing Cross?" "No, that a'n't what I means—poor Bob is dead. [Going down, sir? Charing Cross, sir.]" "But who was Bob?" said I. "Why, didn't ye know Bob, that gemman vot drove the other 'buss?" [Going down, sir? Charing Cross—Elephant and Castle, sir.]" "No indeed, I did not; what about him?" "Why, ye sees, master keeps three 'busses for this turn; Bob drives one—no, he don't now, for he is dead; [going down, sir?]" but Bob used to drive one; I drives this here one, and Jem drives the other. [Going down, sir?]" "Well, suppose he did?" [Going down, sir? Charing Cross—Elephant and Castle, sir.]" We drives four turns up and down every day." "Where from?"

At this moment we arrived at Charing Cross, where he of the whip was too busy "tooting" to attend to the story: the time-keeper called "Time;" we were again in motion; but it was not until we had passed both Houses of Parliament that the "tooting" would allow the conversation to be again begun. "Come then, Sam," I said, "tell us why we don't know what we will come to?" "Well, as I said afore, master drives three 'busses; we starts this here one at nine in the morning from the Wood, with a fresh pair: Bob starts at ten, and Jem at eleven; then, ye sees, we comes up with our 'buss at twelve: Bob comes off at one, and Jem at two; then I comes on at three, and Bob at four, and Jem at five; and then at six I comes off with my last turn, and comes home at eight." "Well, well, I understand all that; but what has it to do with your saying 'we don't know what we will all come to?'" "Why, sir, all the crack 'busses puts in a fresh horse every turn, and a horse that has been the turn afore—'cause ye see, sir, we have so many pullings up, that we does it much better, and not so sore as if we had a fresh or a jaded pair." "But what becomes of the horse who goes out after the first turn; he has only one trip up and down, the

others have two?" "Oh, we puts him in for the fresh horse at the last turn [Elephant and Castle—going down, sir?]" Well, Bob came home last night with his 'buss at nine o'clock; master, you see, pays us on Mondays; I was awaiting for him, and master gives me a sovereign, and Bob a sovereign—Jem would get his sovereign when he com'd home at ten. So I goes with Bob away to his house, and meets his missus, to have summat good for supper, and Bob sits down quite well, and was stone-dead afore ten o'clock. We don't know, sir, as what we may all come to. Poor Bob drove his 'buss up here last night, and was dead afore ten. He had a fine missus, too, and master won't do for her; but that a'n't what I'm vexed for: what vexes me is, master have got another man driving Bob's 'buss, same as he had never been dead; and it goes to my heart to think that I may be dead afore the morn, and master will drive my 'buss, same as if I was not dead; that's what vexes me. We do not know, sir, as what we may come to."

We had now drawn up at the Elephant and Castle, and paid our little sixpence. I bade Sam a good morning, and walked away, wondering at the philosophy which had naturalised itself in the omnibus driver's brain. Reader, we may not exist to-morrow, yet the sun will rise as bright as ever!

#### LANDING AT ELSINORE.

IT was once my fortune to be crossing the German Ocean in a Pomeranian brig, built somewhat after the fashion of the tub in which the three wise men of Gotham are said by the story-books to have set out upon their celebrated voyage. When the wind was three quarters on the stern, the most favourable for propelling her shapeless mass through the waters, the heaving of the log announced the extraordinary pace of three knots an hour. Then the little weather-beaten captain rubbed his hands, and said to me with infinite satisfaction, "Now, I think, we do go." But at other times the faithless breeze wheeled round, and, blowing in our teeth, we retrograded on our march. Then we cast many a longing eye on our more buoyant companions, who scudded past, and left us lingering many a mile behind.

There were many of the comforts and elegancies of life in which our Stettin bark was deficient. The cabin itself was not above five feet broad, and four feet high; and when some unruly wave destroyed the equilibrium, a thump on the head, either upwards or sideways, was pretty sure to make the eyes dance. Then our provisions and utensils were not of the first order. The coffee-pot was a great black cauldron which held five quarts; and a little cupful of something intended to represent coffee being thrown into this volume of water, the whole ship's company were called to regale themselves at this most estimable decoction. In an after part of the day, this same utensil, having performed its duty so well in the morning, was put to the more noble purpose of boiling pea-soup and fat pork, which gave the coffee of the following morning a flavour which it would be needless to describe.

It was scarcely a matter of regret to me that we had a storm in the dangerous Cattegat. It hurled us, in spite of ourselves, in twenty-four hours, through its intricate navigation. The wind howled, the sea roared and foamed, the captain and his crew yelled low Dutch, but in the morning all was hushed and quiet; not a cloud was in the heavens, and we lay at anchor, on a sunny day in June, in Elsinore Roads. The scene was then most beautiful—Sweden with its sloping banks on the one side, and Denmark stretching out a very garden on the other. It was the season of the year when every thing in nature looks most lovely—the fields the greenest, the trees most luxuriant in foliage, the flowers most gay. My heart leaped for joy as I looked upon the land, and upon the hundred ships of every nation scattered through the Sound. Every feature in the scene was animating, yet all was stillness. The annoyances of the voyage were now amply compensated. The cows grazing on the shore reminded me of butter and new milk, and I already enjoyed in anticipation a glorious breakfast. The dirty cabin, and the abominable cauldron, now looked more hideous than ever, and the thoughts of drinking most fragrant Mocha in china cups, and upon a well-ordered table, with all the excellent appliances of terrestrial taste, gave an additional charm to every thing around. I was all hilarity and good nature, and answered to the captain's summons to accompany him on shore with a joyful shout of readiness. We seated ourselves in the boat, and the rowers pulled lustily towards the harbour. It was useless for me to reflect upon the glorious scenery—the all-engrossing topic of my mind was a good breakfast. I kept my eye upon the land, for on it were all my hopes

centered. I judged that something of the same sort was passing in the captain's mind, for his visage grew singularly bright when I asked him if he should breakfast on shore. "To be sure," cried he, raking a quid of tobacco out of his jaw; "the merchant who clears the ship always gives us a breakfast or dinner as the time of day happens, and ours keeps the best table in all Elsinore."

In a few moments we were on the pier, when I was politely accosted by an official of his Danish majesty, called a custom-house officer, who, understanding I was a passenger on my way to Copenhagen, pounced on my hat-box and carpet-bag, and, desiring my portmanteau and myself to follow him, he proceeded at a brisk pace along the quay. As I was marching off in pursuit, the captain sung out, "Mind don't be too late for breakfast." "Never fear," cried I, turning half-round and waving my hand. We had not gone very far before I was desired to walk into a species of guard-room, at the door of which stood two sentinels with their bayonets fixed, ready for execution, if I should attack them with the cane I was flourishing in my hand. They were by no means tall men, not much above five feet, and presented no imposing sample of the Goliaths of the land. After waiting some minutes in this very bare apartment, a peculiar bustle was heard, which evidently betokened some great event. In fact, with an air of considerable grandeur, a gentleman, standing about four feet six inches in his military boots, with a long sword clashing on his heels, and otherwise in the accoutrements of an officer, entered the room. He bowed, with a mien of the utmost condescension, and, paying little attention to the respectful salutation I was preparing in return, he opened his mouth, which I had occasion to observe was without teeth, and uttered some sentences in broken French. As he spoke with some hesitation, and with the natural impediment under which he laboured, it was with some difficulty I comprehended the full purport of his interrogative loquacity. My name, residence, vocation, the object and duration of my stay in Denmark, were amongst the queries of this very important personage; and having satisfaction as to all these particulars, he gravely assured me it would be necessary to have a passport from the police-office made out for Copenhagen, adding, with a look of sympathy, for which I could not feel sufficient gratitude, that he would himself convoy me to the office, and act as my interpreter.

I politely expressed the satisfaction with which I accepted his considerate offer. We sallied out and advanced up a bye-lane. "You have not been in this country before?" said my companion. "No," replied I, with the most winning smile I could assume. The little fellow paused a moment. "Hum! ha!" he ejaculated, "I thought so." As I was not disposed to quarrel with his thought, I made no reply. He again broke silence. "Hem! You are ignorant of the customs of the land, I see," said he. "In what respect have I offended, Monsieur le Capitaine?" I asked, in much alarm. "Oh, bah! a trifle!" he replied; and then taking me by the hand, and putting on the most agreeable grin I ever saw a gen-darme distort his features into, he added, "It is usual, it is the custom—I only mention it because it is proper to keep up the custom—but it certainly is the custom—to give the inspecting-officer a douceur, a compliment—that's all—I merely mention it!" He then let fall my hand, and placed himself in an attitude rather indescribable, but with a look somewhat of the grotesque. I felt considerably embarrassed. The case instantly occurred to me in all its bearings. "It is the fault of the king, who pays his officers so ill, that makes them beggars," thought I. This is an honourable little fellow, whom necessity compels to undergo what he feels a degradation. I placed a small piece of gold in his hand. Never did eyes bespeak greater joy. His countenance at once relaxed; he gave his pomposity to the winds, and, tripping on his toes, he came close up to me and said, "Now, we will go about the passport."

We accordingly made good our way to the police-office. Here the vehement tone of my distinguished escort, acting upon the powerful stimulus of gold in his pocket, soon procured my case befitting attention on the part of the leathern-visaged fraternity of the bureau. I had to undergo an inspection more particular than a Smithfield drover makes of a suspicious bullock. "You will be good enough to take off your hat, sir; we must see the colour of your hair." So it was with every thing appertaining to the face. The passports are ready printed, and require merely the different particulars to be subjoined to each item. Thus the inspector proceeds in his examination, giving out your *points* aloud, which are written down by a clerk. "Brown, low, shady, light-brown, blue, long." "What's long?" interrupted I. "Your nose, sir," answered the officer. "I deny it," said I. "It is certainly a long nose," he replied; "it is an inch and

a half," putting a very dirty finger alongside that most sensitive feature, and carrying the measurement to a scale of inches he held in his hand. "This is not to be borne!" exclaimed I, turning to my martial conductor. "There is no remedy," said he; "they must set down every thing relating to your person, and they send a duplicate to Copenhagen, so that your phiz will be equally well known there." "You are more particular even than in Russia," said I; "but in your petty states there's always more fuss." "Sir," said the patriotic little officer, with the outraged dignity of a Zealander, "what audacious"—but at this moment recollecting, perhaps, the piece of gold, he stopped short, adding, in a more gentle mood, "don't talk so before these people, for if they do not understand your language, they will your manner, and you may be exposed to inconvenience." As I have never been anxious to sacrifice my liberty, I closed my lips and remained silent, at which my worthy conductor rewarded my prudence with a very gratifying smile. The examination being at length concluded, the passport was handed to me, and a fee very civilly demanded. This being settled, as I was afraid of further exposing my ignorance of the usages of the land, I asked my friend if there were any thing usual—any custom—any extras? "Why," replied he, "to be sure, the examiner does expect a trifle—but," added he, "it is only mere bagatelle—a six-dollar is quite enough." Considering the extraordinary delicacy of his handling, I thought it perhaps a little more than "quite enough;" but as the man had heard the magic word, and held his hand half out, it was useless to resist, and a six-dollar floated from me. I observed the soldier and the policeman exchange very significant looks respecting me; but whether they thought me a fool or an over-wealthy Englishman, I could not at that time determine.

I had now been so fully occupied with my own person, that I had forgotten two very essential concerns having reference to myself, namely, my luggage and my breakfast. This latter subject occurred to my recollection with peculiar force, as every moment of delay brought with it increased solicitude on the part of the appetite. As the little officer stood with me at the door of the police-office, I asked him concerning my luggage. He informed me it would be necessary to go to the custom-house, as my attendance would be required there upon its examination. "As it is not far off, I will accompany you thither," said he. "Pardon me," said I; "a matter of greater moment claims my attention; I have not yet breakfasted, and have pressing reasons for wishing to do so forthwith." "It is a subject, sir, I was about to speak to you upon," replied he; "but be assured we will get every thing done at the custom-house in a few seconds, and you will then have no further business to think about. A good breakfast! my good sir, it is the very meal I doat upon." So saying, he advanced his right foot forwards, and I mechanically followed his example. "This little fellow is not so easily shaken off," thought I to myself; "but I must use determination, otherwise the merchant's expected breakfast will be discussed without my presence." With the assurance, however, of the custom-house being close at hand, I thought it best to get the business transacted there, as one of my packages was without the safeguard of a lock. So we journeyed onwards, my companion saluting almost every person we met in the gayest manner possible. He was evidently indeed in high spirits; and though we walked together in silence, it was clear some very pleasant thoughts were passing in the mind of this heroic and polite personage. Ever and anon he looked up at me with a benignant smile upon his countenance, as if he would encourage me in the performance of the arduous duty I was upon. Sometimes I thought there was an odd meaning in the glances he directed towards me; and though his stature and appearance were altogether of so contemptible a character, I could not preserve myself from some feeling of uneasiness. We had now passed through a good many streets, and were come to a causeway which apparently led from the town. I began to think this little imp was amusing himself with a hoax, or was really about to enact some tragedy at my expense. With this impression on my mind, I determined to come to an explanation. "Where are you leading me to?" I cried, with as much ferocity in my countenance as was fitting to assume towards so diminutive a piece of clay. "There!" said he, pointing with one of his digits to a large square building about a quarter of a mile off, and standing upon the edge of the rock which overhung the channel of the sea. "That is the castle of Elsinore," he continued, "so famous in history, and which some of your English ships have not forgotten till this day. It would be improper in me not to show it to you, as it will not take us five minutes." "At any other time—but really—" here he interrupted me. "You must positively grant me this favour—it is not every one I should take so much trouble about." After this compliment, which he accompanied with a gracious bow, I had nothing to do but to submit to my fate.

I therefore continued to follow my Lilliputian guide with a heavy heart, and we at length arrived at the castle. I did not care one farthing about the castle, having my mind engaged upon a very different contemplation. He commenced by expatiating upon the advantages of the situation, which he maintained was the best possible for commanding the passage of the Straits. He argued very strenuously

that no fleet could make head against a foul wind and the guns of this redoubtable battery at the same time. I acceded to every proposition he advanced, as I had no intention of wasting time in arguments, and I thought my acquiescence would shorten his oratory. At length we came to a particular angle in the outer wall of the battery, where a sixteen-pounder popped its nose out. Here he stopped, and, drawing up his figure to the full extent of his inches, said, "This was my post in the time of Denmark's greatest danger. It was here I made my stand against your Nelson. I directed this gun, sir—I never flinched from my post. I believe the enemy was generous enough to confess this single gun did more execution than all the others put together. But it is improper for me to talk of the glory I acquired upon that occasion. It is sufficient to say, if all the soldiers of Denmark had done their duty as I did, if they had had such hearts as the one that beats here"—he hit his breast at this moment a very considerable thump; and whether he knocked the idea out of his head, or it was too big for utterance, he certainly paused in his discourse, and, his eyes losing the fire which shot from them but an instant before, were suffused with a gentle moisture. At any other time I might have entered with some degree of sympathy into the enthusiastic feelings of this courageous patriot, but my stomach was not in tune for heroics, and I could not avoid taking a rather common-place view of the matter. "You will pardon the remark, sir," I said; "but you must have been young at that time." "I was in my sixteenth year," he replied, with a deep sigh. "You had given early proofs of your discretion and valour," I said, "to merit so important a command at such an age."

It seemed to me, a slight shade of confusion passed across the visage of the little fellow, as he heard these rather sarcastic words. But it was a mere flitting cloud, for, turning his eyes up to me, he observed, in a pleasurable tone of voice, "Ah! my dear sir, we will talk these matters over at breakfast. At what hotel do you stay?" "I am staying at no hotel, sir," I replied, with some bitterness. "But you must go to an hotel," said he; "allow me to recommend you to one." "I am engaged to breakfast at a gentleman's house in the town," answered I, "and I shall stay with him during my short residence in Elsinore." "At a gentleman's house!" exclaimed the little man in the greatest amazement; "it would have been more civil to have told me that before." "What in the name of wonder had you to do with it?" I asked, considerably irritated. "I was materially interested in it, sir," he replied; "I came thus far to get an appetite for the breakfast which I was to partake of with you. You have therefore treated me very ill, to deceive me by any such expectation." "Your own impertinence has deceived you, sir," I said, now fairly out of humour; "and if it had not been for you, I should have been seated at breakfast more than an hour ago. Your conduct has been most atrocious." "This is indeed a pretty return for my extraordinary politeness towards you!" shouted the little wretch; "but the honour of my company at breakfast is now out of the question. A miserable John Bull!"

"You contemptible braggadocio," said I, advancing up to him—but I restrained my rage, for I felt the incident was a great deal too absurd to expose myself to the consequences of committing an assault within the walls of a fortress, my very presence there being contrary to rule; so I merely gave him my permission to go about his business as soon as he pleased, and hastened out of the fortification. I set off, boiling with indignation and the heat of the day, for the town as fast as I could, determined now that nothing should come between me and my hopes until they were fully realised. The idea of looking after my luggage even was given up to the first great purpose of the moment. I toiled along the causeway under the scorching rays of a mid-day sun, and the fierce pangs of hunger, which became now more urgent as the prospect of satisfaction grew clearer; and I once more entered the town.

It was now that I encountered a difficulty I had not at first reflected upon. I did not know the residence of the gentleman to whom my letter of introduction was addressed; I was ignorant of a word of the language. I stopped two or three decent-looking persons in the street, who shook their heads and passed on, setting me down, I suppose, for some maniac who had lost the right use of his speech. I was now driven to despair. At length chance brought me to an individual in the garb of a merchant's clerk, who could speak English. He directed me to the counting-house of the gentleman whose name I gave him. I hastened towards it, down one street and up another, and at last entered an office where my labours promised to be at an end. The merchant himself was engaged at the moment, and I waited with great impatience. When he came out, it appeared, upon explanation, he was not the person, although of the same name, the real man living at a distant part of the town. One of the clerks, however, kindly volunteered to show me the house. At the door stood an open carriage, and a stout-looking gentleman on the point of stepping into it. Upon seeing me, now haggard, worn out, and covered with dust, he paused, but, hearing my name, he flew to meet me with the utmost cordiality, saying, "Jump into the carriage, my good fellow; I expected you to breakfast, but that is now all over. My family are at my country house, ten miles off, and they expect

us to dinner. There's no time to be lost, for I have to make two or three calls on the road." What was to be done? Even now, I cannot tell how I endured it, but necessity has no law—breakfast I had none—and before the period of dinner, I was too faint and indisposed to care much for food.

Gentle reader, let my unhappy fate be a sufficient warning, never to land in a country of passports till you have taken the wise precaution of putting it out of the power of the police either to starve you or laugh at your sufferings.

#### SCRAPS FROM THE PORTFOLIO OF A NATURALIST.

A LADY of my acquaintance has a gull, of which she gave me the following account:—"Dick, for so I have called my gull, was brought to me when very young. I educated him myself, and I assure you I never had a more apt scholar. He was placed in the garden, where I had a wooden box put up for him directly under my bedroom window. I fed him regularly; and as he picks up grubs, caterpillars, worms, and other sorts of animals, I call him my under-gardener. Dick and my little spaniel Pop immediately became warm friends; the third in this alliance is Tom the cat. Dick had such an antipathy to a cat I had before this one, that I was obliged to part with it; but Tom, Dick, and Pop, are inseparable, and live on terms of the greatest amity with each other. Last summer, a neighbour begged the loan of Dick for a few weeks to help to clear her garden; but he was brought back in three days in such a drooping condition, that I scarcely believed that the poor bird could live. His eyes were dim and sunk in his head; he was reduced to skin and bone; and I learnt, that although all kinds of food were offered to him, he could not be induced to eat, but he seemed to pine incessantly for his friends and his home. Dick appeared to revive on hearing my voice, and on finding himself once more in his own domicile. This grateful bird never goes to sleep without wishing me good-night after his own fashion. I raise my window-blind, tap on the window, and say, 'Good-night, Dick.' He gives a shrill reply, and then settles himself for the night. However late I may be of making my appearance at the window, I am always sure to find Dick at his post, with his head raised, and his eyes fixed on the window. I must not omit to mention the following proof of Dick's regard for Pop, who had a serious illness some time since. In hopes of the fresh air being of service to the suffering animal, I took him out to the garden and laid him down on the soft warm grass. In a few minutes after, I saw Dick hop up to Pop, whom he seemed to pity very much. After a little confabulation, Dick flew away to his cage, where his food was placed, and, taking up as much as he could carry in his bill, returned and laid it close by Pop, and seemed by his gestures to solicit him to eat the dainties he had brought him."

Every one has heard the story of the young sailor whose true description of the sights he had seen in foreign countries was laughed to scorn by his ignorant parents, but who gave implicit credit to the feigned tale of their raising with the ship's anchor, in the Red Sea, one of the wheels of Pharaoh's chariot. Thus it often happens that facts which are familiar to the well-instructed part of the community, are derided by the ignorant, who, perhaps the very next moment, from a deficiency of knowledge and information, give credit to the greatest absurdities. Apropos to this subject, I may mention, that on remarking one day, in the course of conversation, that the bees of the islands of Jersey and Guernsey went over to France in quest of food, and returned regularly to their hives in these islands, one of the company asked, with a sneer of incredulity, whether they were obliged, like other travellers, to apply to the governor for passports. A vast quantity of small wit was expended on the subject: one wondered how they carried their passports—another how the fees were paid, whether in honey or honey-comb—another made a calculation of the time it would cost the secretary to fill up the passports, and the danger he would run of receiving a stinging reproof from some waspish traveller who might feel affronted by the description given of his age and appearance. In short, the company made themselves exceedingly merry at my expense. I heard their jests in silence; and when they had fired off all their small wit, I coolly took up a volume of St Pierre, and read aloud the following passage on the flight of insects, and their instinct:—"How many discoveries have been owing to the in-



instincts and flights of the winged tribes! Columbus, when on the wide ocean, became confident that he was approaching the New World, when he discovered the flight of birds proceeding from one island to another. Villages in arid situations have not unfrequently owed the discovery of a well to gnats hovering over the vapour of a concealed spring, and many a traveller has been enabled, by the flight of a bee, to discover the honey concealed in the bosom of the forest. Often in the middle of the pathless ocean have I admired the rapid and untiring flight of the frigate bird, which, after flying the whole day long around our vessel in full sail, returned at night to rest on the rocks, the nearest of which must have been at a very great distance. But the flight of the ordinary bee appears to me still more surprising, for respectable mariners have assured me that they have seen, on the coast of Normandy, bees arriving across the water from the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, situated at a distance of more than fifteen miles. The bees come from these islands to the mainland to plunder the flowers, and return to their hives loaded with booty. It is evidently impossible that a bee can perceive its hive at such a distance; and even in the course of this progress it can receive but an imperfect guidance from its eyes, neither can it rest by the way, as its flight is over the sea."

I am indebted for the following story of a spider to an American lady of talent, who is no less esteemed for her worth, than for the various charming productions of her pen. She was the friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott, and her beautiful residence of Charlie's Hope, from which the little story is dated, was not only the resort of her own talented countrymen, but of many intelligent travellers from this and other lands:—"It was my custom to sit, during the heat of the day, in the hall, by a window latticed on the outside, and covered with the sweet-smelling purple glycine, or lupin jasmine. Here I read and wrote, overlooking the comings and goings of my work-people, and ready to answer the thousand demands on a housekeeper's time and patience. It was a lovely and beautiful spot, for independently of this superb jasmine, I had a view of the gallery of greenhouse plants, all seen from the door at one end of the hall, and from the other end was seen the sloping lawn, with its circular grass plot, surrounded by a border covered with grape vines, carnations, and roses, filling the air with perfume. At the foot of this highly cultivated lawn was the main road; on the other side of that lay an orchard of the choicest pears, interspersed with gooseberries and currants; beyond that flowed a graceful winding river, on the other side of which, rising in a gentle sweep to the same height as where I sat, were fine apple orchards, in the height of their glory; this beautiful landscape was bounded by the Raritan hills. All this I saw without moving from my chair. It was my custom to have a tumbler of water on the window-sill, as I had constant use for it one way or other, to dilute the ink to fill a cup in which I macerated the leaves and stems of flowers, a drop of which I now and then submitted to the microscope; for how, in a place filled with so much of beauty and animated life, could I avoid falling into amusements of this kind? How frequently the thing had occurred, I know not; but on raising my head, one day about the beginning of July, I saw a huge black spider run up the tumbler over the edge, and down the inner side, until it reached the water. I found that it was drinking, for, after standing with its head down in the water for a few seconds, the body swelled to twice its size; it then crawled away. On following it with my eye, I found that it disappeared at the corner among the thick foliage of the glycine. The next day it came again; and this it did, excepting when it rained, every day, until the weather became too cold to sit with the window open; so that the inference is, that spiders will drink when water is within reach. We know but little of the habits and customs of spiders, for our aversion to them is so great, that they are crushed the moment we find them crawling about. But their history is very curious, and well worth the attention of naturalists. The principle of vitality is very strong in them, as they continue in health and vigour for a long time, without food of any kind, if we except what may be abstracted from the air, or from the pores of the case in which they may be enclosed. My black spider came again early in June; and as I now made a point of having the tumbler placed on the sill regularly, I frequently saw it. But he was put to the rout by the appearance of a new favourite, and I am sorry to say I saw him no more after the first of July. One of my daughters, in gathering raspberries, saw a spider on one of the bushes, so large, and of such brilliant colours, that she put it into a tumbler and brought it to me. It was kept thus shut up for several days. I then made a cage of green gauze, enclosing within this cage such portions of the branches and leaves of the purple glycine, as would lie in their natural easy positions. In this I put the beautiful spider—but such a spider! The colour of its body was a bright, pale, apple green, cross-banded with orange meshes, having a black spot in the centre of each interstice. The legs were of orange, and each joint jet black, as were the claws; the shoulders and neck bright dark green and gold, the head black, the under part of the body pale straw colour; the orange bars on the back, having the form of intersecting one another, approached each other to the centre of the body underneath, in the form of radiations. In this gauze cage the spider lived in health

until November, neither eating nor drinking of any thing which I presented to it; for although we often threw in flies and other insects, yet they were never touched by him after he had killed them, which he generally did at one stroke; in many cases they were left alive for several days. Whether the little opening which I made to admit the flies, and which I kept pinned close, had been made wider by some ignorant person, or whether done by accident, I cannot say; but on looking for my spider one morning, I found he was gone. He had been in this case for four months, and was in no respect different from his first appearance, the colour and plumpness remaining the same. His body alone would have covered a shilling piece. We made great search for him, but he was not to be found until the next March, when, in clearing out the dead branches of the glycine, the gardener saw him in one corner of the little projection of the top of the window-frame. He must have remained there all winter, having but just apparently crept out of his cocoon. During the summer, he had made several meshes (or webs) around the twigs and leaves of the plant within his cage; but whether it were for the want of suitable food, or was natural to this particular spider, I know not; but the web was much paler and finer than that of the common spider. I am sorry to say that the ignorant gardener killed him.

One of my friends, who had married an Irish lady, used to tell me in her presence, by way of teasing her, that nothing was more common in Ireland than to hear the following order given: "Turn the pigs out of the parlour, the gentry are coming;" and, truly, if all pigs were as orderly and well-behaved as Toby, the favourite pig of my friend Mrs B., there would be less objection to their being received as parlour boarders. I have often thought that if pigs could bring an action against their defamers, any jury of common honesty would award them heavy damages. We every day hear people say gruzzling pig, greedy pig, stupid pig, while many of these very bipeds are a thousand times worse in these respects than the poor pigs they outrage so severely. The pig has a much greater love of cleanliness than his calumniators give him credit for; and he is so fond of a good well-made bed, that when his natural protectors do not provide for his comfort in this particular, he can forage for himself with a degree of sagacity highly creditable to his understanding.

I cannot help thinking that pigs have much more sense than their defamers will allow, and perhaps my readers may come to the same conclusion, after perusing the following account of a pig which belonged to my friend Mrs B., and which I give in her own words:—"Being at a loss what to do with the refuse of our garden, Aunt Mary suggested that a pig should be purchased. Accordingly, our little damsel Annette was dispatched to a neighbouring farmer, and, in exchange for a few shillings, she brought home a fat fair round pig, just six weeks old; and in her haste to display her bargain, she tumbled it out in the sitting-room. Nothing daunted by the splendour of its new abode, the pig ran up and down snorting and snuffing at every chair and table in the room, overturning with its snout my aunt's footstool, and trying its teeth on her new straw work-basket. After the pig had been duly admired and commented on, Annette was desired to instal it in its own domicile; but this was more easily said than done: for being, I suppose, pleased with his quarters, Toby, for so we named him, ran hither and thither, now scudding behind a chair or table, now whisking under the sofa; at length Annette succeeded in dragging him from his hiding-place, while he roared out 'Murder!' as plain as a pig could speak. Annette was very fond of dumb creatures, as she called them; the pig became her darling, and, for want of a companion of her own species, Toby became her constant associate, and, finding his visits to the kitchen were winked at, he made ample use of the privilege, and would bask himself at full length before the fire. He even ventured occasionally to follow her into the front lobby; and if, as sometimes was the case, she put him out into the yard, he would kick up such a row at the kitchen-door to be let in, thumping on it with his snout, that she was fain to admit him to his old quarters. Toby was of a very social disposition, and so fond of Annette, and so grateful for her kindness, that he would follow her about every where; indeed, to my great surprise, one day I found him standing sentry over her while she was putting down the stair carpet, and he seemed to be watching her proceedings with a very sagacious air. In process of time there came another proof that the course of true love never did run smooth. Annette fell into bad health and returned to her home: the damsel who replaced her had no taste for the society of pigs; so she thumped Toby away from the kitchen-door, and many were the blows he got from her broom, or whatever missile came first to hand. Toby was now exiled to his sty, much against his inclination, for he evidently would have preferred bivouacking in the back premises. We seldom passed to the garden without throwing him some comfort in the shape of a few cabbage leaves, a handful of acorns, or a bunch of turnip tops.—It was truly amusing to see Toby make his bed. As the straw which was furnished for it was rather long and coarse, Toby used to take it bunch by bunch in his teeth, and run into a corner, breaking it into small pieces; and having accomplished this feat, he proceeded to arrange his couch in the most methodical manner. One day, Betty having omitted to give

him his dinner, Toby, in a great passion, jumped out of his sty, and came running to the kitchen-door to see what was the reason of his being so shamefully neglected, and long and long were his remonstrances on the subject. Finding it difficult to get the poor animal properly attended to, he was transferred to a neighbour, and we never gave him a successor, as we scarcely expected to find in another of his species that gratitude for kindness and affection for his friends which shone so conspicuous in the character of poor Toby."

#### LOVE OF COUNTRY.

It is a truth which cannot be too frequently repeated, that almost all the good which has been done in the world, all the important discoveries made, have been by individuals, single persons, not combinations of men; and also, that this measure of good would not, in general, have been attained, had the individuals concerned not removed from the places of their nativity to localities where their abilities had scope, and where they were not persecuted by ridicule. It would seem to be almost a law of nature, that mankind should disperse—not take root in the soil, as if they were vegetables. Surely it is possible to retain an attachment in feeling to the place of one's birth, and yet plant yourself somewhere else—go where bread is more honourably to be obtained, and where, at least, you have room for unembarrassed action. We are humbly of opinion, that what is called "love of country" is much too often made a plea for indolence, if not an excuse for some kinds of mischievous prejudice. Hear what a last century writer says on this point:—"To live deprived of one's country is intolerable. Is it so? How comes it then to pass that such numbers of men live out of their countries by choice? Observe how the streets of London and of Paris are crowded. Call over those millions by name, and ask them one by one of what country they are: how many will you find, who from different parts of the earth come to inhabit these great cities, which afford the largest opportunities and the largest encouragement to virtue and vice? Some are drawn by ambition, and some are sent by duty; many resort thither to improve their minds, and many to improve their fortunes; others bring their beauty, and others their eloquence, to market. Remove hence, and go to the utmost extremities of the east or west; visit the barbarous nations of Africa, or the inhospitable regions of the north, you will find no climate so bad, no country so savage, as not to have some people who come from abroad, and inhabit those by choice."

Among numberless extravagances which pass through the minds of men, we may justly reckon for one that notion of a secret affection, independent of our reason, and superior to our reason, which we are supposed to have for our country; as if there were some physical virtue in every spot of ground, which necessarily produced this effect in every one born upon it. This notion may have contributed to the security and grandeur of states. It has therefore been not unartfully cultivated, and the prejudice of education has been with care put on its side. Men have come in this case, as in many others, from believing that it ought to be so, to persuade others, and even to believe themselves that it is so."

#### SHARK FIGHT.

THE following curious account of a shark fight, by an eye-witness, appeared in the *Calcutta Oriental Herald*:—"An instance of intrepidity and dexterity on the part of an up-country native, well worthy of being recorded, occurred lately in this neighbourhood. I chanced to be on the spot when this display of coolness and courage took place; and had I not witnessed it, I confess I should have been sceptical in believing what, nevertheless, is plain matter of fact. I was walking on the bank of the river at the time when some up-country boats were delivering their cargoes. A considerable number of Coolies were employed on shore in the work, all of whom I observed running away in apparent trepidation from the edge of the water—returning again, as if eager, yet afraid, to approach some object, and again retreating as before. I hastened to the spot to ascertain the matter, when I perceived a huge monster of a shark sailing along, now near the surface of the water, and now sinking down apparently in pursuit of his prey. At this moment a native, on the Choppah roof of one of the boats, with a rope in his hand, which he was slowly coiling up, surveyed the shark's motions with a look that evidently indicated he had a serious intention of encountering him in his own element. Holding the rope, on which he made a sort of running knot, in one hand, and stretching out the other arm, as if already in the act of swimming, he stood in an attitude truly picturesque, waiting the re-appearance of the shark. At about six or eight yards from the boat, the animal rose near the surface, when the native instantly plunged into the water, a short distance from the very jaws of the monster. The shark immediately turned round and swam slowly towards the man, who, in his turn, nothing daunted, struck out the arm that was at liberty, and approached his foe. When within a foot or two of the shark, the native dived beneath him, the animal going down almost at the same instant. The bold assailant in this most frightful contest soon re-appeared on the opposite side of the shark, swimming

fearlessly with the hand he had at liberty, and holding the rope behind his back with the other. The shark, which had also by this time made his appearance, again immediately swam towards him; and while the animal was apparently in the act of lifting himself over the lower part of the native's body, that he might seize upon his prey, the man, making a strong effort, threw himself up perpendicularly, and went down with his feet foremost, the shark following him so simultaneously, that I was fully impressed with the idea that they had gone down grappling together. As far as I could judge, they remained nearly twenty seconds out of sight, while I stood in breathless anxiety, and, I may add, horror, waiting the result of this fearful encounter. Suddenly the native made his appearance, holding up both his hands over his head, and calling out with a voice that proclaimed the victory he had won while underneath the wave, 'Tan—tan!' The people in the boat were all prepared; the rope was instantly drawn tight, and the struggling victim, lashing the water in his wrath, was dragged to the shore, and despatched. When measured, his length was found to be six feet nine inches; his girth, at the greatest, three feet seven inches. The native who achieved this intrepid and dexterous exploit bore no other marks of his funny enemy than a cut on the left arm, evidently received from coming in contact with the tail or some one of the fins of the animal.

It did not occur to me to ask if this was the first shark fight in which he had been engaged; but from the preparations and ready assistance he received from his companions in the boats, I should suppose that he has more than once displayed the same courage and dexterity which so much astonished me. The scene was altogether one I shall never forget. The neighbourhood of the combatants to the shore—for they were only a few yards from it—enabled me to see what I have attempted to describe, to the greatest advantage."

#### THE OLD AND NEW SCHOOL OF TRADESMEN.

SUCH of our readers as remember the London tradesman of thirty years ago, will be able to call to mind the powdered wig and queue, the precise shoes and buckles, and the unwrinkled silk hose and tight inexpressibles, that characterised the shopkeeper of the old school. Whenever this stately personage walked abroad, on matters of trade, however pressing or important, he never forgot for a moment the dignified step of his forefathers: whilst nothing gratified his self-complacency more, than to take his gold-headed cane in hand, and, leaving his own shop all the while, to visit his poorer neighbours, and to show his authority by inquiring into their affairs, settling their disputes, and compelling them to be honest, and to manage their establishments according to his plan. His business was conducted throughout upon the formal model of his ancestors. His clerks, shopmen, and porters, all had their appointed costumes; and their intercourse with their chief, or with each other, was disciplined according to established laws of etiquette. Every one had his special department of duty, and the line of demarcation at the counter was marked out and observed with all the punctilio of neighbouring, but rival states. The shop of this trader of the old school retained all the peculiarities and inconveniences of former generations; its windows displayed no gaudy wares to lure the vulgar passer-by, and the panes of glass, inserted in ponderous wooden frames, were constructed exactly after the ancestral pattern. Such were some of the solemn peculiarities of the last generation of tradesmen. The present age produced a new school of traders, whose first innovation was to cast off the wig, and cashier the barber with his pomatum-box, by which step an hour was gained in the daily toilet. Their next change was, to discard the shoes and the tight unmentionables—whose complicated details of buckles and straps, and whose close adjustment, occupied another half hour—in favour of Wellingtons and pantaloons, which were whipped on in a trice, and gave freedom, though perhaps at the expense of dignity, to the personal movements during the day. Thus accounted, these supple dealers whisked or flew, just as the momentary calls of business became more or less urgent; whilst so absorbed were they in their own interests, that they scarcely knew the names of their nearest neighbours, nor cared whether they lived peaceably or not, so long as they did not come to break their windows. Nor did the spirit of innovation stop here; for the shops of this new race of dealers underwent as great a metamorphosis as their owners. Whilst the internal economy of these was reformed with a view to give the utmost facility to the labour of the establishment, by dispensing with all forms, and tacitly agreeing even to suspend the ordinary deferences due to station, lest their observance might, however slightly, impede the business in hand, externally, the windows, which were constructed of plate glass, with elegant frames extending from the ground to the ceiling, were made to blaze with all the tempting finery of the day. We all know the result that followed from this very unequal rivalry. One by one, the ancient and quiet followers of the habits of their ancestors yielded before the active competition of their more alert neighbours. Some few of the less bigoted disciples of the old school adopted the new-light system, but all who tried to stem the stream were overwhelmed; for with grief we add, that the very last of these interesting specimens of olden time that sur-

vived, joining the two generations of London tradesmen, and whose shop used to gladden the soul of every antiquated pedestrian in Fleet Street with its unrefined windows, has at length disappeared, having lately passed into the Gazette. That which the shopkeeper of the present day is to him of the last age, comparing great things with small, is the commercial position of America as contrasted with that of Great Britain at the present moment. The quickened gait of the trader of to-day, and the formal step of his predecessor, are the railways of the United States in competition with their turnpikes and canals.—*England, Ireland, and America, by a Manchester Manufacturer.*—[From all appearance, as respects railways and steam-boat communication, England is in the process of throwing off her buckles, powdered wig, and queue, and will shortly not be a whit behind America in such improved means of locomotion.]

#### SPRING.

[By N. P. Willis.]

The Spring is here—the delicate-footed May,  
With its slight fingers full of leaves and flowers;  
And with it comes a thirst to be away,  
Wasting in wood-paths its voluptuous hours—  
A feeling that is like a sense of wings,  
Restless to soar above those perishing things.  
We pass out from the city's feverish hum,  
To find refreshment in the silent woods;  
And nature, that is beautiful and dumb,  
Like a cool sleep upon the pulses broods.  
Yet, even there, a restless thought will steal,  
To teach the indolent heart it still must feel,  
Strange, that the audible stillness of the noon,  
The waters tripping with their silver feet,  
The turning to the light of leaves in June,  
And the light whisper as their edges meet—  
Strange—that they fill not, with their tranquil tone,  
The spirit, walking in their midst alone.  
There's no contentment, in a world like this,  
Save in forgetting the immortal dream;  
We may not gaze upon the stars of bliss,  
That through the cloud-rifts radiantly stream;  
Bird-like, the poisoned soul will lift its eye  
And sing—till it is hooded from the sky.  
—*Selections from the American Poets.*

**THEORY OF COMPRESSION APPLIED TO THE INTERNAL CONSTITUTION OF OUR EARTH.**—In a note on the subject of the *Compression of Water*, in the new edition of his "Elements of Natural Philosophy," Professor Leslie has thrown out some opinions which are singularly calculated to arrest attention by their boldness, ingenuity, and originality. He had lately an instrument constructed by Mr Adie, capable of sustaining the force of fifteen atmospheres, which indicates the compressibility of substances, both solid and fluid. With this he has made various experiments, which serve as a ground-work to certain novel and curious conclusions as to the internal constitution of the globe, which we are now to notice. The power of internal gravitation upon any object is directly as its distance from the centre—hence the density of bodies must vary greatly according to their depth under the surface. The professor gives formulae for atmospheric air, water, and white marble. From these he infers, that air would have the density of water at a depth of 33½ miles, and the density of quicksilver at a depth of 197 miles under the surface. Water, again, would be compressed into half its bulk at the depth of 93 miles, and would have the density of quicksilver at 362½ miles. Even marble, incompressible as it seems on a superficial view, would have its density doubled at the depth of 287 miles. Each substance has its distinct ratio of compressibility. It is more rapid in the case of water than of marble, and in the case of air than of either. Water and air would have the same density at 35 miles of depth, and water and marble at 173 miles (neglecting fractions). At the depth of 396 miles, or the tenth part of the distance from the surface to the centre, marble would have 3½ times its density at the surface, water 4½ times, while air would have its density increased to the enormous extent of 101,960 billions of times. At the centre, marble would be compressed 119 times, water three millions of times; and, with regard to air, the condensation would be inconceivable, the number required to express it being 764, with 166 ciphers annexed. From these results, founded on experiment, some singular propositions, the professor observes, are deducible respecting the internal structure of the globe. It follows, in the first place, that if the entire mass is composed of such materials as are visible at the surface, the compression of the parts within will mount so rapidly as we descend, that the mean density of the whole will far exceed that of five times the density of water, which results from the experiments of Maskeline and Cavendish. The globe must therefore be hollow or cavernous; and to bring down the density to the ascertained standard, the crust or shell on which we tread, must bear but a small proportion to the diameter of the sphere. On the other hand, an absolute void is inadmissible, for, to prevent the walls of the central cavern from being forced together by the enormous pressure they are subjected to, it must be filled with something, and that something must have a vast repulsive power. Now, there is but one substance we are acquainted with which possesses the necessary elasticity, and that substance is light, "which, when embodied, constitutes *elemental heat or fire*." It is "ejected from every substance by percussion or compression, electrical agency, or chemical affinity," and, travelling at a rate which exceeds by 800,000 times the velocity with which air rushes into a vacuum, its elasticity is sufficiently great

to balance the cumulative compression of the enveloping mass. "We are thus led, by a close train of induction, to the most important and striking conclusion. The great central concavity is not that dark and dreary abyss which the fancy of poets had pictured. On the contrary, this spacious internal vault must contain the purest ethereal essence, *Light* in its utmost concentrated state, shining with intense refulgence and overpowering splendour."—*Scotsman*, 1828.—[If this be not the most correct theory of the internal condition of our planet, it is unquestionably the most elegant and romantic which has been broached.]

**RAFTS OF THE RHINE.**—Those huge rafts which descend the Rhine to Dordrecht, and also in smaller masses to Amsterdam, and other parts of Holland, are remarkable objects in German industry and adventure. They also are for some time the site of habitations for those who navigate them. The women and children support their husbands and parents; and spinning, knitting, tailoring, dress-making, and other objects of thrift, are attended to with great industry. These rafts are nearly similar in construction to those I have seen floating down the St Lawrence. In fact, floating timber down the American rivers in large masses was first attempted on the Hudson and St Lawrence, by the early Dutch and German settlers. The rafts on the St Lawrence and Ottawa are necessarily, on account of the rapids, bound stronger together than those on the Rhine; and the largest on the latter and on the American rivers appeared to me much of the same dimensions—that is, about sixty to seventy feet broad, and six to eight hundred feet in length, with small plank-covered huts for the raftsmen to lodge in, and governed, while floating down the current, by means of anchors and immense oars or sweeps; boats also form an accompaniment. Like the river itself, these rafts gain magnificence in their passage. The timber which descends in small rafts from the Neckar, Murg, Maine, and Moselle, being afterwards connected at particular places, is all floated down the Rhine in one vast mass. The value of one of the largest rafts has been computed by Schreiber at 350,000 florins, or about £30,000 sterling. It affords occupation during its course to from eight hundred to nine hundred persons. The consumption of provisions alone, from the time its construction commences until it is sold at Dordrecht, is stated at 45,000 lbs. of bread, 30,000 lbs. of flesh and dried meat, 15,000 lbs. of butter, 10,000 lbs. of cheese, 50 sacks of dried vegetables, 500 tuns of beer, 8 butts of wine, and several other articles. The live stock for fresh meat is carried on the raft, as well as every other article of provisions. The history of a large Rhenish raft, from the time the trees are beginning to be felled in the forests of Germany and the raft constructed, to its delivery at Dordrecht—its separation, whether for the saw-mills of Holland, or for its exportation to other countries—and its final application, after going through the carpenter, wheelwright, joiner, or upholsterer's hands, to useful purposes—would form curious details of manners and employments.—*McGregor's Note Book.*

**LOUIS BONAPARTE'S OPINION OF WAR.**—I have been as enthusiastic and joyful as any one after a victory; but I also confess that even then the sight of a field of battle has not only struck me with horror, but even turned me sick; and now that I am advanced in life, I cannot understand, any more than I could at fifteen years of age, how beings who call themselves reasonable, and who have so much foresight, can employ this short existence, not in loving and aiding each other, and passing through it as gently as possible, but, on the contrary, in endeavouring to destroy each other, as if Time did not himself do this with sufficient rapidity! What I thought at fifteen years of age I still think: war and the pain of death which society draws upon itself, are but organised barbarisms, an inheritance of the savage state, disguised or ornamented by ingenious institutions and false eloquence.

**OUR ARISTOCRATIC FEELINGS.**—There is a fretfulness about every man's position with us, which is positively frightful. He is never easy, for there is always some little line of demarcation between himself and his neighbour, which he toils to pass over. The aristocracy descends through every link, from the golden to the copper of the country. The Duke of Devonshire is not more exclusive than the duke's poulterer. Society is a long series of little uprising ridges, which, from the first to the last, offer no valley of repose. Wherever you take your stand, you are looked down upon by those above you, and reviled and pelted by those below you. Every creature you see is a farthing Sisyphus, pushing his little stone up some Lilliputian molehill. This is our world.—*Bulwer's Work on France.*

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